

On the third day of the related event, when we got up from our beds in the morning, we did not know what will be in store for us that day. It was April 13, 1934, when Mr. Tara Chand got up a bit early and readied himself for the day's ordeal. He left us and quickly started the motor launch. Immediately, both Rev. Biscoe and Mr. Tara Chand were on the mission of 'Operation Search' having started at about 8.00 am. Again this time they returned empty-handed around the lunch time. Well, Reader! it was a practice during our stay at Ningal in those days to ask every passing boat about the missing Teachers. So far, there was no clue, even though the two Ladies in our Doonga also were always agile to ask every passing boat every day about the whereabouts of the missing squad. As usual, the motor-launch left early at about 2.30 pm on the second shift 'Search operation'. At about 3.00 pm or so, by chance, a Shikara with travellers in it, was sighted by the two Ladies, who beseeched them (the travellers) to acquaint them with the whereabouts of the missing Boat. The Travellers in the Shikara ^{disclosed} the sad news with broken hearts that they had seen the two dead bodies with the broken wooden pieces at Banjar on the bank of the Lake. This melancholic news spread ^{like a wild fire} among all people staying at the Ningal Base Camp. Now the people were eagerly waiting for the early retreat of the motor launch from the Lake side sent there for search/retrieval of the two dead bodies. In case they came back again without any clue, ^{they need not be sent again} Soon the motor launch arrived. Both Rev. Biscoe and Mr. Tara Chand looked dejected. They came over to the bank. They wanted to reveal the sad news but, as was known later, people already gathered there narrated sorrowful happening to them. Then within a short time, a roofless shikara, with two/three paddlers, carrying the two dead bodies and some broken wooden pieces on the Six-Oared Boats, since devastated in the storm, with the broken sail pole reached the bank. A number of Teachers with their seniors like Mr. Jacob, Mr. Bakaya, Miss Mallinson etc. gathered on the spot. The dead bodies were in their blazers and shorts. Both the two (one of Mr. Nanak Chand Kaul, the veteran Captain and the

Mr. Shamboo Nath Khosa, his brother-in-law) deceased ones were being handled by some Teachers and the paddlers of the Shikara. In our Doonga, when the Ladies, viz. my aunt and my mother and the boatman's wife saw from a little distance that the departed ones are being lifted, they induced me to go over to the spot stealthily and watch the position minutely. I was directed by them to return swiftly. Actually, my cousin, Mr. Narain Joo, as usual, had already left the Doonga for a gossip elsewhere. This distressed news of the arrival of the perished spread like a wild fire. Almost all people, barring ladies, assembled there. I, on my part, had run quickly making my way, by walking in a zigzag path, among the crowd gathered there. So, I too stood just in front of ~~the~~ ^{Khaga} both the carcasses of Mr. Kaul. I noticed the skin of both the bodies had changed in colour with bluish patches here and there, as they lay flat on a wooden plank nearby. On looking on their faces, one could only recognise them. I still remember that scene when the face of Mr. Nanak Chand appeared to me to be smiling from his look. His lips were so spread and shaped, as if he was readying himself to talk. But Mr. Shamboo Nath Khosa, who was my class Teacher did impress me with a sober face, as he always used to be. Both of them had sand spread over their bodies, their nails also full of sand. Mr. Nanak Chand had a pocket watch of which the tied thread was round his neck. His chest pocket was searched and the watch taken out. It showed that its needles had stopped moving at about 4.00 O'clock. Immediately, preparations were made to send the two bodies (dead) to their residences situated separately at a distance of about 45 km. from Ningal, for their last rites. Fearing that my presence in the crowd might be noticed, which would have brought with it a reprimand from any quarter, I had to revert back to my resting place in the Doonga. So, I cannot comprehend who accompanied the bodies to the respective cremation grounds and what sort of preparations were made for consigning them to the flames. Here, it is necessary for me to report to you in detail on this matter. Being in constant

touch with Mr. D. N. Kaul S/o Late Mr. Nanak Chand Kaul, who, it appears, was at the juncture a child, but with years had grown up and become aware of all the details of this catastrophe through his mother. As reported by Mr. Kaul, she had revealed to him that the ^{other} Kauls, then their next door neighbours at Barbar Shah Sathu, Kashmir. (Now their sons - Shri Janaki Nath Kaul of Vikas Kunj - Tel. No: 5556614 and Shri Som Nath Kaul of Pritam Pura, Tel. No: 7410384 who also were guided/tutored by late Mr 'Nana' Batuli / Mr. Khosa, respectively, were contacted for confirmation) had declared "No sooner Late Mr Nanak Chand Kauls' dead body, covered with a cloth came in the "Open" shikara near Barbar Shah bridge in the morning of 14.4.1934 crowds and crowds of both Hindus and Muslims had already gathered on both the banks of 'Tsuint Kul'. Every one was talking about the tragedy. It was very hard for them to believe ~~that~~ that the veteran 'Nana Batuli' was after all engulfed by the monster lake far away from them. Even the sky was cloudy and weeping since the morning of that day. By and by all preparations were made and the dead body with its kiths and kins made its way to the cremation ground. Similarly, I made certain efforts to have the position about Late Mr. Shamboo Nath Khosa's corpse arrival at his residence / the related cremation ground confirmed. But to no avail.

Now, at last, a stark truth was established on April 13, 1934, as I guess the date would been on that day, that one of the Six-Oared Boats had capsized / sunk to re-float on April 11, 1934, when the Wular Lake was engulfed by a severe storm. It was hard to believe for the Teaching Fraternity from Rev. Bisce down to a common

Teacher, any Staff member (Except Mr. Tara Chand, my Uncle) or even general public like the Boatmen etc. in the Camp that the Six-Oared Boat captained by Mr. Nanak Chand Kaul had capsized and that he breathed his last on the Lake bank after struggling hard for ^{his} life during the storm and thereafter. What else could he hoped for the Team members! Reader! Please behold, I will tell you later at appropriate place about his bravery and fearlessness. You will, perhaps, recall that I stated earlier that the Camp Teachers and Staff members used to visit our Doonga for a gossip or a chat with Mr. Tara Chand, my uncle, among themselves. Often they enquired from him during these three (11-4-1934 to 13-4-1934) days, whenever he was free, about the plight of the Boat and its Rowers. My Uncle was so sure about the tragedy that he repeatedly emphasized that all the concerned young people had met their end. And, if and when, Mr. Kashi Nath Sadhu used to be one amongst the visitors, my Uncle used to address him as "Look! My Son! From our Mohalla in Rainawari, it was destined that one amongst the two (Mr. Warikoo and Mr. Sadhu) met his death. So, in your place, we lost Mr. Warikoo, how tragic! Waves of gloom used to befall every person in the Doonga as and when we used to listen to such a talk.

Here a pertinent question came to one's mind as to what had actually happened. As I have told you earlier, both the Six-Oared Boats had left Ningal at about 2.00 pm on 11-4-1934 towards the Lake for joy-ride. Perhaps, when they were roughly in mid-lake, they were caught in a storm which became severe and severe by and by. While the Six-Oared Boat commanded by the Teacher, other than Mr. Nanak Chand Kaul, returned to Ningal and reached there at round about 5.00 pm or so - all drenched in rain - on that very day i.e. 11-4-1934, the other Six-Oared Boat captained by Mr. Nanak Chand Kaul proceeded further to brave the winds and waves and torrential heaps of waters by way of rains. B. Disraeli has well said "Man is not the creature of ^{the} circumstances. Circumstances are the creatures of man." It appeared that the subject Boat had been caught in the midst of the Lake when the storm

was at its peak. Perhaps, the Boat capsized and sank to refloat (as the Six-Oared Boat was tight in weight and easily moveable), the paddles floated / scattered on the Lake surface in turmoil while the Teachers would have swam across the Lake, battling against the high waves and gusting winds. It was beyond ones grasp to know or guess how long and for what distance all of them strived to save themselves. After the two defunct bodies were sent to the cremation ground, every one present then at that place also shared the same view. The Teachers, the Staff members kept on discussing the event for all those days at Ningal. But shrouded is the enigma of Mr. Nanak Chand Kaul. As I promised you earlier to tell you about his gallantry and fearlessness, I state here that there was no parallel of him in swimming and diving. His flavour for water was stringent to the hilt and his diving was itself an art for him. Nobody doubted the guess that Mr. Nanak Chand Kaul had stoutly braved the storm and swam across the Lake. In this endeavour, he, perhaps, also helped / encouraged his Brother-in-law, Mr. Shambho Nath Khosa, to accompany him. So, one can very well infer that both succeeded and landed themselves on the bank along with the broken wooden pieces of the (paddles?) and the Sailing pole. The change in colour with blue patches on their skin clearly takes one to the conclusion that they had remained in water for hours together. For how long they were there at the bank at Baniyar is a difficult task to solve. But, it is clear that they might have landed at the bank, after struggling in the Lake, during the night of 11. 4. 1934. Continuing there for the rest of the night and then also for the day and night of 12. 4. 1934 till about 2.00 pm on 13. 4. 1934 when they were picked up by the Shikarawallas for transit to the Base Camp (Ningal). So, their stay at the bank (Baniyar) might have been of roughly 40 hours. Another point is how long they might have been alive after landing at Baniyar bank. It is most distressing to say that they were there uncared for as no one came / reached there to help them for obvious reasons. Actually, they braved the storm and then breathed their last due to the extreme cold also. The remaining five young persons got drowned in the midst of the Lake, though they too stoutly might have faced the gale and the waves in the Lake. The death of